

To: Authorized Representatives and Project Directors of IDEA, Part B Projects
From: Frank Podobnik, IDEA Part B/Data and Accountability Unit Manager
Date: September 14, 2009
Re: Special Education Child Count Reporting – Count Date: October 5, 2009

DUE DATES: November 16, 2009 (Monday)

Application Opens: September 24, 2008 (Monday)

The application and supporting documents for Child Count reporting can be found on the OPI Web site at:
<https://enthl001.mt.gov/Citrix/MetaFrame/auth/login.aspx> .

REMINDERS:

Change in Child Count Date: Please note that the child count date for this year has moved from December to October. This is in an effort to align child count with the fall enrollment collection. Moving the count date will also allow us to leave the application open six (6) additional weeks for data entry. We do anticipate that some districts may see a decrease in their child count numbers for this first year. Districts will not be penalized for decreased numbers, as these are no longer tied to special education funding.

Unique State ID: This 9-digit number is a required field. A unique state ID has been assigned to each student in the state through the OPI's Achievement in Montana system (AIM). The preprinted list of students that is provided in the Child Count data collection application (worksheet report and data entry screen) shows the numbers that were reported last year for each student. Please verify that these are correct. **This field cannot be left blank.** Preschool students and private school students must also be assigned a State ID.

Preschool Level of Performance: This refers only to those students, ages 3-5, entered as part of the Child Count Data Collection. If the student is 3-5 years of age on the count date of October 5, 2009, and was identified after the December 1, 2008, child count, then Preschool Level of Performance information is required. Remember, if a student with an IEP is in a preschool program within the district, regardless of the location of the preschool program, the district must report each student under the school the student will attend when he/she begins attending school.

The application will be open for school districts and cooperatives to print out Worksheets (preprinted list of students from the previous year) for each school on September 24, 2009. User names and passwords will be

needed for this procedure. The instruction manual provides detailed instruction on logging on, accessing and printing reports.

The Child Count Instruction Manual may be downloaded or printed from the OPI Web page at <http://www.opi.mt.gov>. User names and passwords are not required to access the manual. Simply enter the OPI Web page, click on the IRIS tab at the top of the screen and select the Instructions link on the bottom right of the screen. The manual can be found under the Special Education Data collection list of resources.

In accordance with IDEA 2004, every public school district must conduct a child count of all IDEA-eligible students who are parentally enrolled in private schools within the public school district's boundaries. This count must include all IDEA-eligible students whether or not they are receiving special education services through a Services Plan. The child count for these students must be conducted on October 5, 2009. A copy of this count must be maintained by the public school or the special education cooperative on behalf of its member school districts. A copy of this private school child count report will be required to be submitted when applications are made for IDEA Part B funds in spring of 2010. The Private School Child Count Form is the basis for calculating the proportionate share of Part B funds for the 2009-2010 school year. **This form will not be mailed out to districts this year, but can be found on the Special Education Web site** (<http://www.opi.mt.gov/PDF/SpecED/fis/09PrivateSchoolCC.pdf>).

The timeliness and reliability of your data submission will play a key role in your LEA determinations. All data submitted will be used in federal and state legislative reporting, as well as in the determination of fiscal budgetary requirements, so *accuracy and timeliness are critical*.

Thank you for taking the time to ensure accurate reporting of this very important data collection process. If you have ANY questions about this reporting process, please contact Anne Rainey at 406-444-4430 (arainey@mt.gov).